

Washington, DC (May 24, 2012) Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Palm Harbor), a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the International Religious Freedom Caucus, issued the following statement regarding Egypt's first elections since President Hosni Mubarak was ousted 15 months ago:

"This is a historic moment and opportunity for the people of Egypt, and it is my hope that any future administration will value and protect basic human rights, especially the rights of religious minorities such as the Coptic Christians, who have suffered for so long under an oppressive Egypt."

Last year, Bilirakis successfully led a push to place conditions on the \$1.3 billion in annual aid the United States provides Egypt. This money has been used by the Egyptian military to persecute and attack Coptic Christians and other religious minorities.